

REMARKS

Applicants respectfully request reconsideration of the present application in view of the foregoing amendments and in view of the reasons that follow.

Status of Claims:

Claims 1, 5 and 7-16 are currently being cancelled (which includes the “withdrawn from consideration claims 7-16, in which Applicants reserve the right to prosecute those claims in a divisional application).

Claims 2-4 and 6 are currently being amended.

No claims are currently being added.

This amendment and reply cancels and amends claims in this application. A detailed listing of all claims that are, or were, in the application, irrespective of whether the claims remain under examination in the application, is presented, with an appropriate defined status identifier.

After canceling and amending the claims as set forth above, claims 2-4 and 6 are now pending in this application.

Indication of Allowable Subject Matter:

Applicants appreciate the indication of allowable subject matter made in the Office Action with respect to claims 3 and 5 (“objected to”). By way of this amendment and reply, presently pending claim 3 has been amended to place that claim in independent form to include the features of its base claim and any intervening claims (with minor changes made to remove the word “wherein” and to replace it with another appropriate word or words). Thus, presently pending independent claim 3 is now in allowable form based on the indications made in the Office Action with respect to that claim. Claims 2, 4 and 6 have been amended to depend from claim 3, whereby those claims are also now in allowable form.

Claim Objections:

In the Office Action, claim 6 was objected to, for the reasons set forth on pages 2 and 3 of the Office Action.

Claim Rejections – Indefiniteness:

In the Office Action, claims 3 and 5 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 112, 2nd paragraph, as failing to set forth the subject matter which Applicants regard as their invention. Based on the amendments made to claim 3 so that it is now in accordance with Figures 5 and 7 and the description of those figures in the specification, this rejection has been overcome (claim 5 has been canceled, thereby mooting the rejection of that claim).

In the Office Action, claims 3 and 5 were also rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 112, 2nd paragraph, as being indefinite, because “said switch” lacks antecedent basis. Based on the amendments made to claim 3 to recite “a switch” at the first occurrence of that feature, this rejection has been overcome. Claim 5 has been canceled, thereby mooting the rejection of that claim.

Claim Rejections – Prior Art:

In the Office Action, claims 1 and 2 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Applicants’ Admitted Prior Art (AAPA) in view of JP 2000053338A to Ando; and claims 4 and 6 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Applicants’ Admitted Prior Art (AAPA) in view of Ando and further in view of U.S. Patent No. 6,539,739 to Goto et al. Due to the cancellation of claim 1, and due to the changed dependencies of claims 2, 4 and 6 so that they now depend from “allowed” claim 3, these rejections have been overcome.

Conclusion:

Since all of the issues raised in the Office Action have been addressed in this Amendment and Reply, Applicants believe that the present application is now in condition for allowance, and an early indication of allowance is respectfully requested.

The Examiner is invited to contact the undersigned by telephone if it is felt that a telephone interview would advance the prosecution of the present application.

The Commissioner is hereby authorized to charge any additional fees which may be required regarding this application under 37 C.F.R. §§ 1.16-1.17, or credit any overpayment, to Deposit Account No. 19-0741. Should no proper payment be enclosed herewith, as by a check being in the wrong amount, unsigned, post-dated, otherwise improper or informal or even entirely missing or a credit card payment form being unsigned, providing incorrect information resulting in a rejected credit card transaction, or even entirely missing, the Commissioner is authorized to charge the unpaid amount to Deposit Account No. 19-0741. If any extensions of time are needed for timely acceptance of papers submitted herewith, Applicants hereby petition for such extension under 37 C.F.R. § 1.136 and authorize payment of any such extensions fees to Deposit Account No. 19-0741.

Respectfully submitted,

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